

# CAUTION!

Premiere Issue - Fall 2004

Illinois Department of Transportation Traffic Safety Magazine



## IN THIS ISSUE

School Bus & Work Zone Safety • You Drink & Drive. You Lose. • Highway Safety Plan 2005



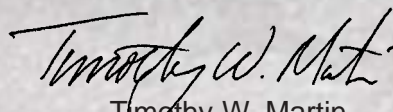


**CAUTION!** Slow down and carefully take notice of IDOT's new quarterly publication. This new magazine highlights safety initiatives, events, educational opportunities, and our efforts to be accountable to the citizens of Illinois through statewide safety programming and outreach. In this inaugural issue you will find our feature story on School Bus Safety to increase awareness of motorists, pedestrians, and students now that the school year is under way. Also in this issue, is information on the state's mobilization crackdown on impaired driving and the importance of safety belt usage as we celebrate lives saved because individuals buckled up.

Safe transportation is a priority for the State of Illinois. Under the direction of Governor Rod Blagojevich, a reorganization of the Division of Traffic Safety is expected to bring more accountability and commitment to Illinois residents. **CAUTION!** is an opportunity to demonstrate the department's ongoing efforts to do just that. IDOT has submitted the annual Highway Safety Plan (HSP) to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) with a new emphasis on rural initiatives, occupant protection, an aggressive community outreach agenda and tougher enforcement efforts to stem the rise in alcohol-related traffic fatalities and crashes.

Annually, the department distributes millions of dollars in federal funding to grantees that administer safety projects outlined in the HSP. As the U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta expects state transportation departments to be data driven and safety focused, we believe our local grantees should be likewise. They will be expected to produce quantifiable data that shows they are making a difference in the lives of Illinois residents. As we look to decrease costs associated with the administration of safety projects, our goal is to increase behavioral and attitudinal change related to impaired driving, occupant protection/child passenger safety and pedestrian issues.

As readers proceed with "Caution!," along the way you will find highlights on the work of our grantees in communities, tips and resources, and public safety initiatives that are designed to save lives. We hope you enjoy the trip.

  
Timothy W. Martin  
Secretary



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# IDOT HONORS SURVIVORS SAVED BY THE SAFETY BELT

Safety belts save lives. That message was clear during a news conference and awards ceremony held in Chicago to celebrate lives saved because of safety belts. Fifteen survivors who attended the event in August at IDOT's Emergency Traffic Patrol Center were inducted into the Saved by the Safety Belt Club and awarded medallions celebrating their lives.

Sixteen-year-old Rebecca Oginni of Crystal Lake spoke of a serious car crash she was involved in this spring where she fell asleep behind the wheel and crashed into a tree, totaling her car. She attributed her escape with only minor injuries to being trained at a young age to wear her safety belt. "I want to thank my mom who taught me to always wear my seatbelt."

Speakers at the event included survivors, along with Secretary Martin, State Sen. John Cullerton – who sponsored the primary safety belt law in Illinois, ISP Director Larry Trent and NHTSA Regional Administrator Don McNamara who commended Illinois motorists for 83 percent seatbelt compliance, up 7 percent from last year.



*Officer  
Bartkowiak*

*J.R. Lauer*



*Rebecca Oginni and  
others inducted into  
the Saved by the  
Safety Belt Club*



Police departments from Chicago, Crystal Lake, Hoffman Estates, Lincolnshire, New Lenox, Schaumburg, Streamwood and the Illinois State Police attended the event and presented awards to individuals from their districts.

Traffic safety advocates throughout the state are working to increase public awareness of the lifesaving value of buckling up by recognizing individuals who have been Saved by the Safety Belt. For more information or to submit a nomination for the Saved by the Safety Belt Club visit [www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov). ⚠️



You Drink & Drive

YOU LOSE





## ILLINOIS STEPS UP EFFORTS TO REDUCE IMPAIRED DRIVING

The Illinois Department of Transportation, Illinois State Police and local law enforcement agencies throughout Illinois teamed up on one of the most aggressive impaired driving reduction efforts to date. IDOT and law enforcement delivered the, "You Drink & Drive. You Lose." message to drivers during a 17-day enforcement period, centered on Labor Day Weekend.

The more than two-week crackdown began with news conferences throughout Illinois that put motorists on alert that drinking and driving will not be tolerated. This was the first national crackdown effort since all 50 states and the District of Columbia enacted .08 Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) laws for impaired driving.

In 2003, 1,454 persons were killed in traffic crashes in Illinois and 639 of those fatalities were alcohol-related. During the Labor Day holiday last year in Illinois, 60 percent of the crash fatalities were related to alcohol which was 16 percent higher than the year's average.

The "You Drink & Drive. You Lose." enforcement combines focused law enforcement efforts with a more than \$14 million national advertising campaign, the largest paid media campaign since the 1999 inception of "You Drink & Drive. You Lose." Illinois' share of the campaign was nearly \$700,000, and focused on strict enforcement of drunk-driving laws during the 17-day crackdown.

The state of Illinois is taking a zero tolerance approach to those who decide to drink and drive. During the stepped up enforcement period, more than 400 local law enforcement agencies teamed up with the Illinois State Police to conduct roadside safety checks and saturation patrols. Their message... if you drive while intoxicated, you will go to jail.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, studies show that nearly 97 percent of Americans view drinking and driving by others as a threat to their families and themselves. Americans support tougher enforcement and rank impaired driving ahead of health care, poverty, the environment and gun control as an issue of importance. ⚠️

## IDOT PARTNERS WITH BEVERAGE ASSOCIATION TO SAVE LIVES

Watch your BAC? At first you may have thought this was a typo, however "BAC" stands for "Blood Alcohol Content" and is the focus of an aggressive anti-impaired driving campaign - "You Drink & Drive. You Lose." This was done in coordination with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). Radio and television announcements hit the airwaves August 20 through Labor Day reminding motorists of the consequences of drinking and driving.

New this year was a partnership with the Illinois Liquor and Beverage Association (ILBA). "We really would like to extend our most sincere thanks to the ILBA, whose participation and financial support helped make this campaign a huge success," said Timothy W. Martin, Secretary of Transportation. "The corporate partnership between ILBA and IDOT enabled us to get the message out to the public, at no cost to the taxpayers of Illinois, while enabling IDOT to help save lives this holiday season, and that is priceless." BAC calculators, "Designate a Sober Driver" posters, napkins and coasters were on display at more than 15,000 restaurants, bars and liquor stores across the state.

The BAC calculators were given to patrons to help people understand their legal responsibilities when driving. While the illegal limit for blood alcohol content is 0.08 percent; many people falsely believe the old limit of 0.1 percent is still in effect, so the BAC calculators serve as an educational tool.

"This campaign has proved to us that when government partners with corporate America, as was the case with 'You Drink & Drive. You Lose.' everybody is a winner!" Martin said. ⚠️

# ENGINEERING SAFETY BY DESIGN

## TRAFFIC SIGNALS HELP VISUALLY IMPAIRED

In an effort to improve safety, IDOT is installing new technology to make crossing the street safer for pedestrians who are visually impaired.

Three new auditory pedestrian signal systems will be placed in the Chicago area at the crosswalks of Madison and 1st Avenue in Maywood, Des Plaines and Madison in Forest Park, and Madison and Harlem Avenue in Oak Park. Signals are located near the Progress Center for Independent Living.

"For too long senior citizens and people with impaired vision have had to fear crossing streets because the older signals can be confusing," said M.J. Schmitt, First Vice President of the American Council of the Blind. "This system is easy to use and user-friendly for persons with disabilities. Now that the technology is available why shouldn't we have it?"

The new system works as follows: A locator tone helps guide pedestrians to push a crossing button. When the button is pushed, the request is acknowledged by a brief message saying "please wait." Then a bright red light indicates the request to cross has been acknowledged. If the push button is held for three seconds, a longer message is given. The voice-activated message will say, "wait to cross Harlem Avenue." The message changes depending on the street to be crossed. When the "Walk" indication is given a few things happen. First, an audible message of "Walk Sign Harlem" is repeated until the "Walk" sign terminates.

Additionally, the push button and a raised directional arrow over the button vibrate. Then, the red turns off and is ready for the next pedestrian to activate the button. When the "Walk" sign terminates, the locator tone begins again letting the pedestrian know the "Walk" sign is no longer illuminated and the "Stop" hand sign is flashing. All audible tones and messages are reactive to ambient noise, increasing and decreasing in volume with their surroundings.

## MOTORISTS BENEFIT FROM INNOVATIVE LIGHTING

Illinois drivers depend on the state's highway system to be safe and efficient. IDOT does not take this responsibility lightly. Roadways throughout the state are continually monitored to meet the needs of motorists.

An innovative safety project in the Springfield area that provides additional lighting to an intersection with multiple turn lanes is getting positive feedback from drivers. In October 2003, IDOT installed a system of lighted road markers to guide motorists through dual turn lanes at the intersection of Veterans Parkway (Illinois 4) and Wabash Avenue on the southwest side of Springfield. There are dual turn lanes in all four directions of this intersection which could contribute to difficult navigation.

As each left turn signal is activated, the accompanying lines of lighted markers illuminate the roadway to provide additional lighting that is only visible to the motorists who are turning. The greatest impact of this project has been to guide motorists through an intersection with dual turn lanes at each approach without having confusing and overlapping markings on the pavement.

Typically this type of lighting is used to warn motorists of pedestrian crosswalks, delineate traffic lanes through tunnels and around curves, and to guide airplanes down taxiways. District 6, together with the Central Bureau of Operations, installed this as an experimental feature in an area that is heavily traveled by people frequenting the mall and nearby businesses. The complete intersection was improved to reduce crashes and add more lanes to reduce congestion.

The in-pavement lighting system costs approximately \$120,000 and will be reviewed annually to determine effectiveness. So far, the reaction from motorists has been very supportive of the project.



# AAIM Brings Together Offenders and Survivors to Share Stories

Marti Belluschi , AAIM Board Member

For many people, it is shocking to see DUI / reckless homicide offenders shaking hands with, and sometimes even hugging, grieving crash victims. But the Alliance Against Intoxicated Motorists (AAIM) often puts these types of people together with the goal of saving lives on our roadways.

The stories are graphic, gory, frightening, painful, and very, very sad. Most important, the stories are true.

As part of its efforts to prevent deaths and injuries caused by intoxicated motorists, AAIM works extensively with surviving loved ones, injured victims and DUI / reckless homicide offenders to provide presentations to high schools and to DUI offenders, who are court-ordered to attend. As participants in Victim Impact Panels, these offenders and crash victims tell an audience of the horrific and tragic consequences of impaired driving. The stories are graphic, gory, frightening, painful, and very, very sad. Most important, the stories are true.

Although it is impossible to measure the exact influence, Victim Impact Panels are an excellent prevention tool. They provide new drivers and first-time DUI offenders with emotional but factual information to use in making important decisions. They encourage everyone to not drink and drive, to stop others from driving drunk, to not get in a car with an impaired driver and to always wear safety belts. The participant stories show that the consequences of these choices have a human face, one that is shedding real tears.

Crash victim and offender presentations are not, of course, the simple solution to the problem of drunk driving. They are only effective as a part of the larger plan for Illinois, which includes tough laws, strict enforcement, proper sentencing, competent alcohol treatment, prevention programs and public awareness efforts.

As a crash victim myself, whose face was badly damaged by a windshield, I always end my presentation by telling the audience "...that is what drunk driving does. It takes away faces and it takes away lives. We are begging you to make the right choice."

I am optimistic that some of them remember our stories and because of our heartfelt messages, decide not to drink and drive. ⚠️

## Work Zone Safety Legislation Emphasized in Illinois

Four safety-related bills passed during Spring Session of the Illinois General Assembly and have been signed into law by Governor Blagojevich. These laws increase the penalty for speeding in work zones and are currently in effect.

### HIGHLIGHTS

**PA 93-705** provides that the fine for failing to follow proper procedures upon entering a construction or maintenance zone is not less than \$100 and not more than \$10,000.

**PA 93-667** authorizes the Secretary of State to suspend or revoke the driving privileges of a person without a preliminary hearing upon a showing that the person has violated a provision of the Vehicle Code concerning driving in construction or maintenance zones.



**PA 93-947** allows the Illinois State Police to establish an automated traffic control system for obtaining a photograph or other recorded image of any vehicle violating the speed limit in a construction or maintenance zone established by the Department of Transportation or the Illinois State Toll Highway Authority.

**PA 93-955** increases the minimum fines for speeding in a work zone from \$150 to \$250 for first offenses. The fine increases for subsequent offenses.



**N**ow that school is in session, motorists are urged to exercise extreme caution and be prepared to stop when approaching a school bus. IDOT is committed to the safe transportation of students to and from school by providing driver education, school bus inspections, and public awareness information. It is everyone's responsibility to act responsibly when driving near school buses because of the precious cargo they are carrying – our children.

Many times drivers become upset when they are behind a school bus because it slows them down or requires them to stop when the stop arm panel is extended. State law requires anyone traveling behind a stopped school bus to stop as well. Any person convicted of passing a stopped school bus will lose driving privileges for three months and be fined \$150. If a motorist is convicted of a second or subsequent offense within five years of the original conviction, driving privileges will be suspended for one year and the fine is \$500.

School bus laws are designed to save lives not to make motorists late for their next appointment. That is why it is imperative to drive carefully and be prepared to stop suddenly, if necessary, to avoid rear-ending the bus or hitting a child.

The majority of children injured or killed in pupil transportation are not injured or killed on the school bus, but outside the bus. Most are struck by motorists who fail to stop for the flashing red lights and extended stop arm. The area around the bus is often referred to as the "Death Zone." When the red lights on the school bus are flashing and the stop arm panel is out, motorists are required to STOP at any location. This includes, but is not limited to, motorists traveling from either direction on a two-lane roadway, motorists traveling in any lane on a one-way street, and/or motorists traveling through parking lots.

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The area around the bus is often referred to as the "Death Zone."

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Norm Mars of Laidlaw Transit, Inc. in Springfield says driver education is very important to maximize safety. In addition to ongoing training, drivers are taken on practice runs to familiarize themselves with the area in which they will be driving to determine safe routes.





everyday. So we want the kids to partner with the driver to be part of a team to safely arrive together.”

IDOT and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) are also a part of that team. The goal of NHTSA's school bus safety program is to reduce school bus-related crashes, injuries, and fatalities through behavioral programs and vehicle regulations. IDOT's School Bus Inspection Program is responsible for establishing standards for the construction and inspection of school buses and conduct vehicle and driver inspections and training. NHTSA established and, through the state transportation agencies, enforces the Federal Motor Vehicle Standards with which school buses must comply to better protect passengers. ⚠️

“Routes are prepared and submitted by the school district. We test drive those routes and if we come to an area that we feel is unsafe, for instance if the sight distance is improper where a vehicle could run into the back of the bus because they couldn't see it, we may alter the stop by stopping on the other side of the street if that is safer,” says Mars. “We mainly look at whether a stop is in an area where the bus can't be seen from an adequate distance and we also don't want kids crossing multi-lane streets and other unsafe areas.”

Laidlaw Trainer Kevin Harris says parents, teachers, and the bus drivers have to work as a team because the bus is an extension of the classroom. Behavioral issues must be addressed and handled so that kids know there is a certain way to behave on the bus. “(They should) stay in their seats, keep the noise level to a reasonable level, all body parts inside the bus and listen to the bus driver because things will come up such as railroad crossings, accidents, construction zones, detours. All of these things happen



## SCHOOL BUS SAFETY TIPS

### CHILDREN SHOULD:

1. Be on time.
2. Never run to or from the bus.
3. Stand back from the curb.
4. Not push or shove.
5. Stay in your seat.
6. Not yell or shout.
7. Always obey the driver.
8. Wait for the driver's signal before crossing.
9. Always cross at least 10 feet in front of the bus.
10. Never crawl under a bus.


### PARENTS SHOULD:

1. Make sure your children know and follow these rules.

2. Meet the bus.
3. Remove drawstrings from clothing so they won't catch.
4. Get involved in bus safety campaigns.
5. Increase public awareness of school bus safety.
6. Work with local police department.
7. Remember the "danger zones"-bus driver can't see you-10 feet in front, sides and rear of the bus.
8. Watch for bus lights that indicate the bus is preparing to stop.
9. Remember school buses must stop at railroad crossings.
10. Always stop 20 feet from the bus when the stop arm is out. Always wait for the stop arm to go back before proceeding.

# POLICE ACCEPT TRAFFIC SAFETY CHALLENGE & WIN BIG REWARDS

Steven R. Casstevens and Paul Rizzo, Illinois Traffic Safety Challenge, Co-coordinators



Several law enforcement agencies were recognized recently for their outstanding efforts in addressing traffic safety issues in their communities. On August 19, 2004, the "Illinois Traffic Safety Challenge" awards breakfast was held at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare as part of the Illinois Chiefs of Police summer conference.

The Traffic Safety Challenge, coordinated by the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police – Traffic Committee, recognizes police departments, sheriff's agencies, and other law enforcement entities in the state that wish to apply. The "Challenge" is to

address traffic safety issues through written policies, officer training, public information and education and enforcement. Agencies must also rate the effectiveness of their efforts.

Agencies that wish to compete in the program submit an application with the required information, and the applications are reviewed by a team of judges, who then assign a final rating. The top three agencies in each category (based on agency size and type) are recognized at the breakfast. Along with awards, each of the top three agencies receive other "prizes" to take back to their departments. The program is



ILLINOIS  
TRAFFIC  
SAFETY  
CHALLENGE  
2003 WINNER





supported largely through a grant from IDOT, and is also supported by corporate sponsors who donated products as well as monetary donations to help offset the cost of the grand prize.

This year's grand prize was a 2004 Chevy Impala police package, which was donated in part by General Motors. The remaining cost was paid for by donations from Nationwide Insurance and Symbol Arts, a police badge company. The car was won by the Ogle County Sheriff's Department. The 2nd grand prize, a Decatur Electronics Speed Monitor Trailer, was won by the East Hazel Crest Police. The 3rd grand prize, a 14 foot Traffic Safety Trailer, was won by the Glen Carbon Police. Glen Carbon also won the "Rookie of the Year" honors as well as the coveted "Judges Award" for best overall program.

In all, 28 law enforcement agencies from throughout Illinois were recognized at the ceremony. In addition, the National Chiefs Challenge will hold its recognition ceremony in Los Angeles in November, and 19 national awards will be presented to Illinois agencies. Once again, Illinois has shown its commitment to traffic safety not only statewide but nationwide. ⚠️



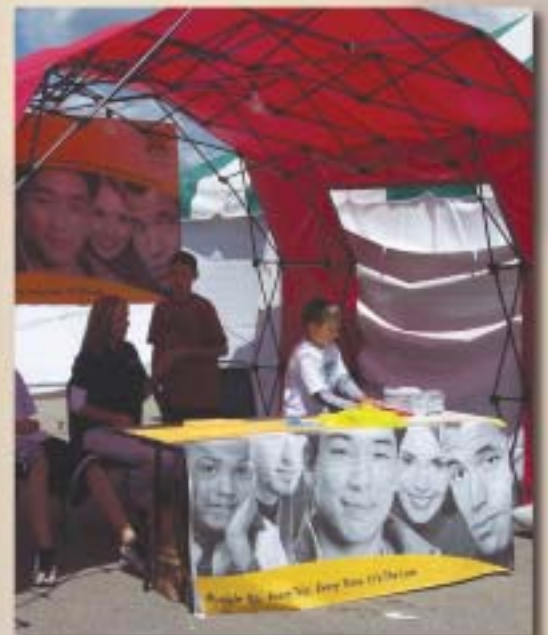


# IDOT at the Springfield & DuQuoin FAIRS



## IDOT FLOAT ENTRY WINS "GOVERNOR'S AWARD"

The IDOT "School Bus" float entry in the DuQuoin State Fair won the "2004 Governor's Award." The float was designed and built by the IDOT exhibit and display shop. District 9 employees accompanied the float in the parade. The float also made an appearance in the Illinois State Fair parade; there it was accompanied by numerous IDOT employees from the central office.





# IDOT ISSUES 2005 HIGHWAY SAFETY PLAN

## DUI PREVENTION AND OCCUPANT PROTECTION ARE TOP PRIORITIES

The Illinois Department of Transportation's top priority is to save lives on Illinois roadways. Our 2005 Safety Plan is a roadmap for what's to come next year.

### SAFETY PLAN 2005 HIGHLIGHTS

#### SAFETY FACTS

In 2003, 1,454 persons died in crashes in Illinois and an additional 131,279 persons were injured. The fatality rate per hundred million miles of travel increased by 2.1 percent from 2002 to 2003.

#### FACTS ABOUT ECONOMIC COSTS\*

- The total estimated cost of crashes in Illinois for 2003 was \$10.5 billion
- Each fatality was estimated to cost \$1.12 million

#### FACTS ABOUT FATALITIES

- 1,454 persons were killed in 1,308 crashes in 2003
- There was an average of 1.1 deaths per fatal crash

#### FACTS ABOUT ALCOHOL

- 43% of all fatally injured drivers who were tested had a positive Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC)
- 50.5% of the fatally injured drivers 16-24 years of age who were tested had a positive BAC

#### REVERSING THE DEADLY TRENDS

Under the 2005 Safety Plan, IDOT has set three key priorities:

1. Reduce the statewide fatality rate through aggressive outreach campaigns and partnerships.
2. Continue to increase seat belt usage through training, increased penalties, education, advertising campaigns (Click It or Ticket), partnerships with law enforcement, and media outreach.
3. Reduce deaths and injuries related to driving under the influence (DUI) through aggressive anti-DUI marketing, training, advertising campaigns (You Drink & Drive. You Lose.), community outreach, targeted education programs and partnerships with law enforcement.

You can read the complete safety plan online by visiting our website at

**[www.dot.il.gov](http://www.dot.il.gov)**

*\*Based on estimates made by the National Safety Council for 2003*

## TRAFFIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES RECOGNIZED FOR LIFE-SAVING ACT



*Mike Johnson and Greg Gifford Credited  
With Saving Revenue Employee's Life*

IDOT Traffic Safety employees Mike Johnson and Greg Gifford are receiving praise for saving a man's life. On Wednesday September 22, 2004, Department of Revenue Director Brian Hamer held an appreciation ceremony honoring the two for saving Revenue employee Jeff Lane's life.

On February 20, 2004, the two were working in the basement area of the Williard Ice building, where they were shredding IDOT documents, when they noticed a stack of pallets falling that trapped Lane between two pallets. Johnson and Gifford immediately acted by pulling the load off of him. The pallets which possibly weighed a few hundred pounds

pinned Lane in such a manner that he was unable to breathe or speak. Although Lane has undergone back and knee surgeries as a result of the accident, he is expected to make a full recovery and has since returned to work.

"Please join me in congratulating Mike and Greg for their quick thinking and assistance," said IDOT Secretary Timothy W. Martin. "Because of their actions, Mr. Lane is alive today."

Gifford and Johnson will receive plaques from the Department of Revenue honoring them for their heroism. ⚠️



### **DRIVE SAFELY WORK WEEK OCT 4-8**

Sponsored by Network of Employers for Traffic Safety - focuses on positive actions that drivers can take to ensure their safety and the safety of others sharing the road as they work or commute to and from work.

### **PUT THE BRAKES ON FATALITIES DAY OCT 10**

Initiated by the National Society of Professional Engineers - working to lower the number of citizens who are dying in tragic and usually preventable accidents on the nation's roadways. Issues addressed are the need for improvements to our highways, vehicles and basic driver behavior.

### **SCHOOL BUS SAFETY WEEK OCT 17-23**

Sponsored by the National Association for Pupil Transportation - held each year during the 3rd week of October. Highlights school bus safety programs including proper behavior on the bus as in the classroom. "Be Cool, Follow the Rules."

### **RED RIBBON WEEK OCT 23-31**

Sponsored by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) - supports efforts to reduce the demand for drugs through prevention and education programs. Wearing a red ribbon during the last week in October, demonstrates opposition to illegal drugs and pays homage to those who have given their lives in support of the nation's struggle against drug abuse.

### **HALLOWEEN SAFETY TIPS OCT 31**

*Trick-or-Treaters Should:*

- ▶ Carry a flashlight.      ▶ Walk, don't run.
- ▶ Stay on sidewalks.      ▶ Obey traffic signals.
- ▶ Approach only houses that are lit!
- ▶ Make sure costumes don't drag on the ground.
- ▶ Wear clothing with reflective markings or tape.
- ▶ Stay in familiar neighborhoods.
- ▶ Don't cut across yards or driveways.
- ▶ If there is no sidewalk, walk on the left side of the road facing traffic.
- ▶ Go with your parents or adult.
- ▶ Have parents check treats before eating

### **IMPAIRED DRIVING AND SAFETY BELT CAMPAIGNS NOVEMBER/DECEMBER**

IDOT, the ISP and local law enforcement agencies will conduct enforcement campaigns during the holiday season to curb impaired driving and enforce safetybelt usage. Enforcement efforts will include roadside safety checks and saturation patrols.

### **NATIONAL DRUNK & DRUGGED DRIVING PREVENTION MONTH (3D MONTH) DECEMBER**

National coalition conducts public awareness and enforcement campaigns to prevent impaired driving. Reducing alcohol-related traffic fatalities is one of NHTSA's top priorities. Law enforcement, justice system and community leaders work in partnership to prevent impaired driving.

**BUCKLE UP  
SPRINGFIELD**



**SEAT BELTS  
SAVE LIVES**



Illinois Department of Transportation  
Division of Traffic Safety



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